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SIPDIS

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TAGS: MARR NATO PREL PGOV

SUBJECT: USNATO GUIDANCE: FRENCH PARTICIPATION IN NATO'S COMMON FUNDED BUDGETS

REF: USNATO 225

Classified By: DASD JAMES TOWNSEND, REASON 1.4 (B/D)

¶1. (U) In general, Washington concurs with position outlined by USNATO in Refs A. Additional guidance is provided below.

¶2. (C) In light of other Allies' strong feelings on this issue, it is not necessary for the U.S. representative to take the lead in urging full French participation in common budgets, but Mission should feel free to draw on the following points to underscore our strong desire for full French participation, as appropriate:

-- In our view, it is important that French reintegration be as complete as possible, politically, militarily, and financially; France's reintegration decisions have Alliance-wide impact and the potential for setting precedents.

-- The equitable sharing of the obligations of Alliance membership is a bedrock principle of NATO. It is a defining feature of how we do business.

-- If we understand France's position correctly, it is that France is prepared to participate financially in all future programs to which it agrees, but that it does not feel bound to participate in funding programs that were agreed without France's concurrence. It does not rule out participation completely, but would want to "opt in" on a case-by-case basis.

-- We can understand this position to a point, but would ask France to reconsider its position. The fact is that a substantial portion of the programs and infrastructure projects under development by NATO will have positive security benefits also for France.

-- We would also ask France to consider the optics of selective participation in common funded budgets at the same time that it is planning its full participation in the NATO command structure that is supported by those budgets.

-- Given that new NATO members are expected to participate fully in all capability packages or addenda which they have been invited to approve, we would ask that France, as an original NATO member, consider doing the same.

-- We expect France to participate in NSIP and other commonly funded budgets on the same basis as all other Allies.

¶3. (C) With respect to French participation in multi-nationally funded NATO or NATO-related programs such as AWACS, Alliance Ground Surveillance, or SAC C-17, we understand that France will not participate in the acquisition or modernization portions of these programs. However, SRB representative is instructed to resist any

effort by the French to define in advance the degree of its participation in the infrastructure and support portions of these programs. It is not essential at this time to push for a clear French position on this issue. Those decisions can and should be made when these specific requirements are presented for final decision in the responsible NATO committees.

CLINTON